

James Buchanan to Andrew Jackson, July 28, 1837, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JAMES BUCHANAN TO JACKSON.

Bedford Springs, Pa. , July 28, 1837.

. . . . I have been on a visit to the Western Counties of this State for the purpose of seeing my relations. From my observation, I believe, that with the exception of the City of Pittsburg, the suspension of specie payments by the Banks has, in this region, aided rather than injured the cause of Democracy. Much now depends upon the conduct of Mr. Van Buren. I have been asked fifty times by political friends since I left home, whether he possessed sufficient firmness and energy of character for the station which he now occupies. His refusal to convene Congress, and his change of resolution so immediately after, doubtless for good reasons but without assigning any cause for it in his proclamation, have made rather an unfavorable impression upon some of our friends. They say the old General would not have acted thus.

Should the President decline taking the responsibility of recommending decided measures to Congress, as his enemies predict, it will be fatal to his popularity in this State. If on the other hand, he should come out boldly and decidedly against the employment of any Bank, whether State or National, as the fiscal agent of the Government in collecting and disbursing the public revenue, and propose Treasury agencies at proper points for this purpose, he will place himself on elevated ground. For my own part I have entire confidence in his firmness; but this quality of his character will be put to the test at the meeting of Congress. It will then, I trust, be made manifest that he is worthy of being your successor.

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It is mortifying to observe what a powerful influence the Bank of the United States exerts over the minds of those who consider themselves the well born and the well bred of the land. At this Watering place there are but few who are not its advocates and who would not hail its re-charter by Congress as a sovrein panacea for all our political evils. Many believe, or affect to believe, that the public deposits will be restored to it immediately after the meeting of Congress. It is among the hard handed and honest farmers and mechanicks of the Country that the opposition to this Institution and to a monied aristocracy prevails.